The COMMONWEAL

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Catholic Press Month 1942

IN TIMES like this the editorial difficulties of a general review of the arts and public affairs tend to accumulate. Censorship cuts down on the supply of reliable news. And as the national war effort gains in intensity and effectiveness we become so caught up in the national struggle that it becomes increasingly difficult to think clearly or distinguish between propaganda and truth.

The picture on the business side of things is hardly more encouraging. Even a modest venture such as THE COMMONWEAL, although far less affected than many publications, has a sizable capital overhead and is extremely sensitive to rises in production costs and, as consumer commodities grow scarcer, advertising revenues diminish. This in brief is the background in the general periodical field which also casts its shadow over Catholic periodicals in February, 1942.

Year after year in February in many dioceses and archdioceses throughout the country concerted efforts are made to interest the faithful in the official diocesan press, with its NCWC news reports from distant quarters and its local items from each respective diocese. This collective effort extends also to periodicals which support home and foreign missions, magazines fostering popular devotions, and various educational journals. This observance also reaches an independent general review edited by Catholic laymen, such as THE COMMONWEAL, whose rôle requires constant clarification.

Unifying forces are badly needed in the United States today, not only for the long, hard prosecution of a war that is just beginning, but also for the difficult peace that is to follow. Stress and hardship which can reasonably be expected to intensify during the next few years engender mutual envies and suspicions. The factors that divide us—personal prejudices due to class, occupational, sectional and religious differences—become painfully prominent at the very time that unity, charity, cooperation and a spirit of brotherhood are most needed throughout the land.

Since its inception nearly twenty years ago THE COMMONWEAL has sought to foster collaboration on vital social problems among men of good will of every creed and color. In addition to the thousands of Catholics alive to its possibilities this review has sought the interest and expressions of opinion of an ever-widening circle of Protestants, Jews and non-believers of good will. It is gratifying to note that a number of non-Catholics have hastened to the magazine's assistance in past hard times. And the fact that over 700 public libraries and 215 non-sectarian college and university libraries in all parts of the United States now subscribe to THE COMMONWEAL indicates the possibilities for its influence in instituting good and fruitful social relations. Preeminently, then, THE COMMONWEAL constitutes a small, unofficial sector of the American Catholic press. It reaches out and deals specifically with the secular world, bringing as its contribution to the solution of modern social problems the light of centuries of Christian experience and tradition.

Yet at this very moment, when it has reached the apex of its potentialities for civic effectiveness, THE COMMONWEAL is threatened with extinction. The war indeed has brought increasing production costs, advertising uncertainties and other harmful factors that now impinge upon an already precarious existence. In fact, if necessary funds are not forthcoming THE COMMONWEAL must suspend publication within three months.

The sum needed to insure continuance, however, is a comparatively moderate one. Ten thousand dollars will be sufficient to settle present debts, and see the magazine through the coming spring and summer and safely through 1943. Those who know the cost of starting a publication, or reviving one after a few years' lapse, will agree that this is a paltry sum compared with what would be required for revival if THE COMMONWEAL were forced to cease publication because of the war. Aside from the fact that these are times when the usefulness of THE COMMONWEAL is at its height, it is virtually certain that suspension now means that THE COMMONWEAL is gone for at least a generation.

Naturally those who understand and support what THE COMMONWEAL seeks to do comprise a distinct minority. But the prospect, if alarming, is far from hopeless. If those who are aware of this review's importance to Church and State act in concert the emergency can readily be met. With

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this issue begins a campaign to enroll one thousand ten dollar associates within the next few weeks. There is reason for confidence that among all the well-wishers this review has enlisted in the past eighteen years, there are 1,000 who will manage to donate or raise $10 each.

We appeal to each and every reader—subscriber, newsstand or pamphlet rack purchaser, borrower or library reader—to become a COMMONWEAL associate. Join more intimately with us in an effort which, to the extent it succeeds, will unite rather than divide the nation in this time of peril, engender the common good of town, state and nation, and prepare foundations for a just and lasting peace.

Inflation and Price Control

IN WAR TIME, without some thought about it, it might seem indecent to talk and worry about a thing like inflation. But if we fail to think about it, and fail to do a lot about it, the country and the people we are trying to defend will suffer through inflation a tremendous catastrophe. Inflation is part cause and part effect, part symptom and part disease; it can be a symbol and a part of the breakdown of the social, economical and political institutions and order of the nation.

The Price Control Act was passed and signed none too soon. During the six months it was debated and side-stepped, we entered the crisis period, on the brink of serious inflation: "civilian production has stopped growing and from now on, however much the national dollar income increases, the amount of goods available for consumers to buy will shrink."

The Price Control Act is necessary but it is not enough. The President's excellent statement issued when he signed the act made this plain:

> The act, taken all in all, is a workable one. It accomplishes the fundamental objectives of setting up a single administrator and empowering him to establish maximum prices and rents over a broad field, to prohibit related speculative and manipulative practices, and to buy and sell commodities in order to obtain the maximum production.

The Act both has teeth for the enforcement, and safeguards to protect the individual. But:

> . . . Price control legislation alone cannot successfully combat inflation. To do that, an adequate tax and fiscal program, a broad savings program, a sound production program and an effective priorities and rationing program, are all needed.
>
> Finally, all bulwarks against inflation must fail, unless all of us—the business man, the worker, the farmer, and the consumer—are determined to make those bulwarks hold fast.

The Public Affairs Committee, which has printed many excellent pamphlets bringing social analysis and study of national problems to the ordinary reading public in clear and summary form, has just now published No. 64, "How to Check Inflation," by John M. Clark—a splendid and most helpful warning and stimulus written in thirty pages: pages which ordinary citizens really ought to read. "Inflation, in plain words, is a situation in which the prices of pretty much everything go up and our dollars will not buy nearly as much as they used to. . . . The increased dollar income will then be divided between taxes, savings (which may be lent to the government), and increased prices. *What does not go in one of the first two ways will go in the third.* The sooner all Americans learn this, the more chance we shall have to avoid a really calamitous inflation."

The pamphlet does not take much time depicting how "calamitous" inflation is in modern society. Lurid descriptive powers are necessary for that, and not much reflection is needed to find the outlines. The pamphlet does hint . . .

> Inflation is a tax everyone pays but which, for the most part, never gets to the government. . . . Retirement allowances and pensions . . . insurance policies . . . interest on bonds . . . workers . . . farmers . . . the government itself . . . inflation gets in the way of the war effort . . . But perhaps the most important thing is that inflation sets people against one another, raises expectation that cannot be fulfilled, and breeds a feeling of dissatisfaction and injustice.

We can only summarize, this week, Professor Clark's summary of what to try to do:

> We can increase supply or make the most of the supply we have. We can try to keep the demands of the war effort as orderly as possible. We can cut down civilian buying power when it outgrows supply, by taxes, loans, or credit controls. And we can go to work on prices directly by informal pressures or formal orders.

The biggest debate on the Price Control Bill was over the absence in it of flat wage regulation and farm price control which city people felt was comparable to that set over the prices of city-produced commodities. This pamphlet warns against the spiral which could so easily develop by the competitive pulls of wage rises and farm price rises:

> What is needed is to bring together all the groups, in the light of the supreme national emergency and of the clear fact that there cannot be enough to satisfy all demands. Granted understanding and courageous leadership, standards of policy could be worked out which would avoid this futile and vicious spiral.

But we can only recommend that you read the pamphlet, and, "whoever you are, remember that this emergency calls for sacrifice from all of us. If we all face the fact and accept it, we may still avoid serious inflation. But if we try to escape our share of burdens, we shall probably be cheated by shrinking dollars, and the country will suffer inflation, which is one of the worst evils war brings with it."

Actions Lie Louder than Words

THE MOST RECENT development in the Red Cross's policy with regard to its blood bank was formulated, the New York *Times* tells us, by Mr. Davis, Red Cross national chairman, "in consultation with the Surgeons General of the Army and Navy and issued with the approval of the

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Secretaries of War and of the Navy." The former policy was to accept no blood from Negro donors; now the blood of both White and Negro donors will be acceptable, but "will be processed separately, 'so that those receiving transfusions may be given plasma from blood of their own race.'"

For quite some years, now, the vast majority of Americans have suffered the indignity of adding horse (or cow) serum to their blood streams when vaccinated against small pox. Many American women have had to endure the horrors of ingesting rat hormones. Negro milk (save the mark!) has suckled White babies. But after a conference between five men who certainly have plenty of other business on hand, it is solemnly decided that the Red Cross—the American Red Cross—shall keep rigorously separate the blood plasma of White and Negro donors. "He told us," the *Times* quotes Representative Marcantonio as saying of Mr. Davis, "he recognized the scientific fact that there is no difference between the blood of Negroes and Whites."

In a recent film intended to inspire Americans with the horrors of nazi notions, the most heroic figure was a German professor who was thrown out of his university and had to flee his country because he refused to tell his students what he knew to be false—that the blood of the various races of mankind differs. Americans were supposed to shudder—and many of them doubtless did shudder—at such an attempt to enforce a scientific lie.

This whole episode, of course, is a symbol. It is a symbol of two things. One is the deeply emotional nature of the problems of American race relations. To overcome this will require a long process, and a process in which righteous indignation will play its part, as well as patient education. But it is also a symbol of something even more alarming—a lack of courage and honesty in our public life which are deeply disturbing. For the Red Cross is generally supposed to be a scientific institution and a dispenser of mercy. It *could* have refused point blank to lend itself to what is in effect scientific lying, however much Mr. Davis tries to wriggle out by assuring us that of course *he* knows it's all nonsense. The effect of what has happened is to add another item to the emotional stock-in-trade of race mythology. Actions lie louder than words, Mr. Davis.

More and Less Children

THE LAST WEEK in January saw a full-dress parade of the organized believers in birth control. First a one-day meeting of the New York Federation for Planned Parenthood, then a three-day session of the Birth Control Federation of America. Almost every implication of the movement found expression. Morris Ernst cheered his friends by predicting that the State of New York would provide birth control service within a decade and by assuring them that the Catholic Church is divided on the subject. He also talked of the economic waste that knowledge of birth control would eradicate. The next day the National Federation heard from Dr. Dorothy Ferebee of the need in Harlem for birth control, which she saw as the only long-term solution for that community's many miseries. Julian Huxley sounded the most up-to-date and streamlined note: "Planned parenthood is a democratic ideal. Forced parenthood is a slave ideal. Suppression of the knowledge about birth control is part of the general suppression of freedom, without which totalitarianism cannot exist." Finally Dr. A. F. Guttmacher of Johns Hopkins suggested that the medical profession relax its barriers against therapeutic abortion in order to "cheat the criminal abortionist." . . .

The mind suffers a certain sheer weariness when confronted with so many arguments along so many different lines, and to discuss the points one by one would be an even greater weariness. Moreover it would require far more space than is here available. But this much needs saying once again. The whole question has to be considered on two wholly different, if interlocking, levels: one might call these the philosophical-theological and the social-economic. The first of these levels is that which Catholic thinkers almost instinctively choose when they discuss the subject; the second is the only one which possesses meaning for liberal advocates of birth control. The arguments on the two levels are quite different. Thus Mr. Ernst, although he overstates it, is approximately right when he says the Church "favors limitation of families on the grounds of health or where there is inadequate food. . . ." (The word *favors,* of course, is too strong.) And he is right when he finds that the difference between the Federation and the Church is one of method. But to Catholics, that which makes Mr. Ernst's methods impossible is vastly important; to Mr. Ernst it is not.

What is most generally neglected in all discussions of the subject is its over-all social implication. Advocates of birth control in practice neglect it; their opponents know little about it. The whole controversy therefore exudes an atmosphere of unreality, bitterness and tense emotion which succeeds only in banishing reason. It is manifestly absurd, for instance, to think that the miseries of Harlem can be cured by the simple process of helping Harlem mothers to have less children. The economic pressures and moral lapses which make possible the existence of such social cancers are what must be attacked. The long range effects of population increases and decreases must be taken into account. It is the neglect of such matters which so largely invalidates the birth control controversy.

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Man's Image of Man

An address to the American Catholic Philosophical Association.

By **Walter Lippmann**

MOST of us have, I think, taken it easily for granted that an age of progress was brought to an end by the great war which began in 1914, and we have then attributed to the war itself, as if it were an accidental and extraneous piece of very bad luck, the disorder of this age. Surely, that is only the appearance of things. Surely the truth is that our Western civilization was already sick when the war of 1914 broke out, and it is to this sickness, immensely aggravated by war, that we must attribute the failure of the peace and of the reconstruction.

The symptoms of that sickness have been most visible not only in the ensuing catastrophe of revolutionary war but in the widespread sense of personal disorientation which preceded it. Men were increasingly uneasy, unsettled, and unhappy in the years before the great catastrophe of our age.

The moralist may describe this inner disorder as vice and sin. The statesman may describe it as discontent and lawlessness. The physician may describe it as a maladjustment disclosed by such symptoms as confusion, anxiety, depression, frustration, inferiority, persecution, aimlessness and weariness. The theologian may describe it as godlessness. They are, I believe, talking about the same thing. They are talking about the modern men who have failed to understand and to live in the order to which man, as he is really constituted, belongs. The modern man is a sick man because—misconceiving the nature of man—he has allowed himself to become the kind of man who cannot be happy, who cannot operate the institutions of the Western World, who cannot find security and serenity in the universe.

For the paramount characteristic of the modern man is that he rejects the classic and traditional conception of human nature, which is, as Plato says, that the soul leads the affections, and as Saint Thomas Aquinas says, that the human person exercises "a royal and politic sovereignty" over the desires. The modern view of human nature has been that reason is not the representative within us of the universal order—and therefore the ruler of our appetites—but that reason is the instrument of our appetites—that, as Mr. Bernard Shaw has put it, "it is only by accurate reasoning that we can calculate our actions so as to do what we intend to do—that is to fulfill our will."

This conception of human nature—one in which desire is sovereign and reason is the instrument for serving and satisfying desire—this conception has become increasingly the accepted image of man in the modern world. It is upon this image of man that our secular education has been based, and our social philosophy, and our personal codes. Our world today is in the hands of masses of people who are formed in this image and regard it as indubitably the true and scientifically correct conception of human nature. Yet the cultural tradition and the great central institutions of the Western World come down to us from men who would have regarded what is now the fashionable image of man as the image of an uncivilized barbarian.

This modern man, as he is turned out by our secular schools and as he is shaped by the prevailing popular culture, is a being whose desires are limited, not by his reason which represents the universal order of things but only by the difficulty of getting more and more satisfaction. The desires of the modern man are, as respects his own inner measures of control, illimitable desires. It follows that the desires of the modern man can never be satisfied, and it is the anguish of unlimited and therefore insatiable desire which is the characteristic misery of our age.

For the unending pursuit of the ever-fleeting object of desire means not only that a man must surely fail; it means also—and this is much worse than failure—that his whole effort must seem to him futile. Yet in our age—because we have accepted the secular image of man—our social criterion of progress has been that we must encourage and incite ourselves to be forever unsatisfied, to think nothing is enough, and thus to seek the satisfaction of insatiable needs.

Thus we have made social problems insoluble. For while we talk of a standard of life, in fact we have no standard of life except that each man shall desire more than he has thus far obtained. Under nineteenth-century capitalism the ideal of the successful man was interminable acquisition of wealth and power. Under twentieth-century social democracy the ideal is the same, except that more persons are involved in the interminable acquisition of wealth and power. In neither social philosophy is there any measure of or any means of putting a limit upon what men shall desire and

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then seek to acquire.

It is precisely here, I believe, that the peculiar social problem of the Western world has been generated. For at bottom the social problem is not that of satisfying men's objective needs: modern technology is able to do that. The social problem of the modern world arises not out of the objective difficulty of providing an adequate material existence but out of men's subjective expectations, which because they are unlimited and insatiable, cause violence, inequality, hatred and frustration.

Though we like to tell ourselves that our purpose is to solve the social problem by ministering to men's needs, in practice we have a conception of human nature, and derived from it an educational system and a commercial and political propaganda, which treat all needs as unlimited. No income can therefore be sufficient to satisfy men's needs. For the appetite merely grows from feeding it. No standard of living is a standard. For there is always a more luxurious standard. No prosperity is rich enough. For the statistical curves on the charts might always go higher still. No nation can be big enough and no state can be powerful enough. For, until someone has conquered the whole world, it is always possible to be bigger and greater than you are.

Thus there can never be contentment and peace of mind for modern men because their desires are irrational and, therefore, always expanding and forever unsatisfied. Their insatiable desires are an unending torture, like that which the gods inflicted on Sisyphus, in which they hunger though they eat, thirst though they drink, feel they are naked though they are clothed, long for love and cannot consummate it, seek and never find, achieve and always fail. This is the bitter core of the unhappiness of the modern man. He is an unhappy man and, therefore, a dangerous man, because he could not ever be satisfied. His true nature, which is to find peace in the rational measure of things, has been deformed by desire that knows no limit and can find no rest.

* * *

This, I believe, is what we have to understand if we are to understand the discontent which is shaking the world. Men cannot remain civilized when they have rejected the culture of their civilization: that is to say when they no longer think of themselves and their place in the universe, when they no longer discipline themselves and their children in the tradition which comes to them from the prophets and the saints and the teachers and the philosophers and the discoverers who raised Western men out of barbarism. The secular man—the man who obeys his impulses and knows no reason that transcends his wishes—this secular man, now dominant in the world, has for his chief article of faith an ideal of secular progress which is totally alienated from and profoundly opposed to the real character of the human person.

He supposes himself to be a bundle of desires which can be satisfied by becoming richer, more powerful, more famous, more glamorous, more irresistible. For in the secular tradition men are not taught to think that the disciplining of their desires to a rational measure is indispensable if they are ever to be truly satisfied. Thus the modern conception of progress is self-defeating. For it is based on a fundamental misunderstanding of the economy of human existence: the secular theory of progress is an effort to balance the supply of satisfactions and the demand for them by expanding the demand faster than the supply can be increased. And since demand comes from our appetites, which grow by what they feed upon, whereas supply can be increased only by work and sacrifice, a philosophy which fails to insist upon the limitation of desire must make men forever unhappy—forever incapable of being satisfied and therefore forever seeking the unattainable.

* * *

We frequently fall into error and folly, says Dr. Johnson, "not because the true principles of action are not known but because, for a time, they are not remembered." The true principle of action, long known but in our century not remembered, is that man is so constituted that his greatest need is not the satisfaction of his desires but that his reason shall impose law and order upon his desires. This is the truth about man without which—had it not been discovered, had it not been revealed—our barbarian ancestors could not have bred more or less civilized descendants. Without the discovery of the truth about the nature of man, the barbarian would not have wished, nor would he have had any idea of how, to raise himself out of barbarism. And, as we can see by looking at the world about us, as soon as men lose hold of this truth, seeing no compelling reason why they should restrain their appetites, they quickly become barbarians again.

* * *

The ideal which arises out of the classical image of man is not progress, which merely seeks to multiply the supply of satisfactions, but the good life.

To pursue the good life, as described, for example, by Aristotle, is to cultivate not some but all the human dispositions by limiting each to a Golden Mean; thus the demand for satisfactions, the promptings of appetite, the pressure of ambition, though recognized as natural and normal, are never unlimited. They are disciplined to the reality of things, and having been made moderate,

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they are not inherently and forever doomed to disappointment and frustration.

As perfected in the religious tradition of the West the good life is an imitation of God—that is to say, the cultivation of the reason, which is an imitation of His omniscience, and of the only true freedom—the freedom to follow the dictates of reason—which is an intimation of His omnipotence.

Men who live in this tradition are capable of brotherhood in a civilized society. They can prefer to do unto others what they would have others do unto them. For men who choose to be ruled by reason are bound together as equals—equals not in the vulgar sense that they have identical or even comparable gifts and talents—but because they seek to reason and to obey reason.

This common potentiality gives them the right to hope that they can discover justice, that they can agree upon what is right. Their common freedom to follow reason by mastering their desires gives them the common hope that they can make and maintain a civilized order.

Thus we see that the golden rule in social relations will work only among men who practice the golden mean in their personal conduct. Without these two elemental laws of human existence—that of the golden mean and that of the golden rule—the good society is impossible. The secular conception of man rejects the golden mean and has therefore made unworkable, even though lip-service is still given to it, the golden rule. For where there is no limitation upon desire—no willingness to accept the discipline which the golden mean requires—then the relations of men with one another must become an interminable struggle for domination and survival.

* * *

When aggregations of men are "emancipated"—that was how they described it—when they no longer feel themselves bound by the elemental laws of their own nature, they do not in fact feel that they are free men. For they are oppressed by inner confusion and the anxieties of insecurity. Far from entering into a joyous sense of freedom, they feel themselves at war with one another, and indeed at war within themselves.

That is why, as modern men cast off the bonds of tradition, they were not imbued with the spirit of confident enterprise and exhilarating adventure: the completely secularized modern man has disclosed his true condition within himself by joining in the search for protection and stability, seeking security from the state as he has lost his self-confidence and his self-reliance.

For at bottom the personal life of a man will be a disordered life if he has no rational command over his desires. In this disorder the sources of man's confidence in himself, and with it his peace of mind and his resolution, are impaired. The modern secular way of life is not suited to the real nature of men. For it withholds from them that discipline of their own impulses which is indispensable to their health and their happiness. Because they are deprived of a rational measure upon their desires, they do not conserve their energy but spend it upon unattainable and unsatisfying ends.

Disordered men cannot face life confidently: their impulse must, therefore, be to escape from the pressure of their own insatiable appetites, and from the endless conflicts with other men who also are driven by insatiable appetites. For disordered men there is at last no solace except in a flight from reality. Lacking confidence in themselves they cannot seek refuge in themselves, achieving peace in solitude and meditation. They seek refuge among the masses of their fellow beings, becoming anonymous, faceless, and no longer persons in some one of those mass movements which are so characteristic of our times.

Actuated by their own inner disorder, driven by fear, inspired by fantasies of hope, these masses in movement cannot constitute a society. They are a horde, as Toynbee has put it, arising within our civilization rather than invading it from without. They are a horde of beings without autonomy, of individuals uprooted and so isolated and disordered that they surrender their judgment and their freedom to the master of the horde. Thus out of the chaos to which the evolution of secular individualism leads, there is born the formless mysticism of an irrational collectivism. The dissolution of Western society ends—as we have seen it demonstrated in the lands where it is totally advanced—in an organized barbarism which makes the lives of all who fall within its power "poor, nasty, brutish and short."

The outcome proves that above all the other necessities of human nature, above the satisfaction of any other need, above hunger, love, pleasure, fame—even life itself—what a man most needs is the conviction that he is contained within the discipline of an ordered existence. Man can bear anything except a sense of his own utter demoralization. As long as he has the support of a discipline which is rational and transcends his immediate promptings, he will endure discomfort, pain and danger. That is why men with faith can face martyrdom while men without it feel stricken when they are not invited to dinner.

* * *

This neglected truth about the nature of man is at the core of the great central tradition of the Western World. In this tradition, man does not fulfill his destiny except as he is ruled by the

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reason within him which transcends that which is only animal, because it is attached to that which is universal. The tradition is a hard one to live by, and few succeed, and none altogether. But hard as it is, the rule of life it imposes is not an unworldly counsel of perfection. It is the truth about the only way in which men can be happy. That there is so little happiness among men shows only how hard it is for most men to do the hard things that alone can make them happy.

Yet we need not doubt that men will, indeed that men must, rediscover and return to the great tradition in which our civilization was made. We know that the truth will prevail, and we may be sure that it will prevail because, men being what they are, they have within themselves, in the very structure of their own beings, the authentic means and the imperative need to find the indispensable truth. Were this not the fact, they would never have found it.

And so, though we live in a time of trouble in which much, perhaps most, of what we cherish might be destroyed, nevertheless we may be sure that men can, that men must, and that therefore men will, re-create that which matters in that which has perished. For the roots of the good society are not in charters and in buildings but in the men who made them, and, more exactly, in that part of the nature of the human person where resides his reason and his freedom to follow his reason. This part of man is indestructible. For in all men who are born it is reborn.

City on a Mountain

America's gift to Mexico and a practical contribution to Pan American amity.

***By* Harry Sylvester**

ABOUT forty-five years ago, a Jesuit scholastic in France had a desire to be a foreign missionary. He still has that desire, unfulfilled still where the windows of his seminary look out on a mountain pass that leads not to Compiègne or Burgundy but to the *Llano Estacado,* the great Staked Plain of the American Southwest.

After this scholastic was ordained, he taught in various seminaries, including ten years at an English one and during the first World War. He went from there to Central America, still hopeful of doing missionary work, but inevitably returning, due to his abilities, to his work in the seminaries. From Central America he went to Mexico, and from Mexico to New Mexico, where today Augustine Waldner, who began life in Alsace-Lorraine, is the rector of Montezuma Seminary.

He is a slight, bird-like man, gentle and intelligent, whose sincere courtesy is strangely embarrassing to one used to the false heartiness and manners of the city. He has been given a delicate and extremely urgent and important job to do, and the peculiar nature of the war in which the United States finds itself involved has not diminished but rather increased the complexity and importance of the work under his charge.

To give a Catholic country priests is to give it the most that can be given to it in one gift. For the best part of five years the United States has literally been giving Mexico a large proportion of the latter's priests. The implications of this fact alone should give the many people variously interested in Pan-American relations something to think about. We have also given the Latin-American nations insulting movies, scornful and ignorant diplomats, and starry-eyed good-will messengers who didn't even speak Spanish. But we have given them one good thing, too, and it looks as though we are going to continue to give them this.

To be sure, it was the American and Mexican hierarchy whose idea it was that Mexican priests should be educated in this country while the anti-religious statutes remain in the Mexican constitution. But Father Waldner tells me that the government of the United States has been cooperative at all times. And yet the various publicists interested in Pan-American relationships have written little and then inadequately about Montezuma Seminary. It seems to me that this bespeaks the essential fallacy back of our Pan-American policy, namely, the failure to realize the fact that while the United States is a Protestant nation, it is virtually the only one in this hemisphere. One does not ask that the people who control our Pan-American policy like the fact that the Latin-American nations are Catholic. One does not even ask that they not dislike this fact. All one asks at this time is that this fact not be ignored. We ignore it at our peril.

The Seminary had auspicious beginnings. One of the few facts generally known about it is that

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it was originally a Fred Harvey resort hotel, which fell on evil days when Southern California and Southern Arizona began to be developed. It passed through various hands before Archbishop Gerken of Santa Fe bought it, in bad repair, and began to administer a sum of about a quarter-million dollars to put it in shape. This sum was given by the Mexican and American hierarchies, who continue to support the Seminary.

Archbishop Gerken's own diocese of New Mexico is about eighty percent Mexican, and they are a people very dear to him. He felt so strongly about the seminary and its implications that, not content with administering the money for it, he journeyed the seventy-odd miles from Santa Fe and for days worked at manual labor in the reconstruction of the building. Incidentally, he urges the priests of his diocese to work as foremen or laborers at any building being done in connection with their parish activities, and many of them, particularly in the northern part of the state, follow his advice.

The seminary itself trains only secular priests, but is administered and taught by Jesuits who are directly responsible to the Archbishop. These Jesuits are all from the Mexican province of the order and virtually all of them are native Mexicans. There are one or two Frenchmen beside Father Waldner, and one of the younger teachers, Father Rahaim, is half-Syrian, although born in Mexico. Curiously, some of the students and teachers are American citizens, having been born here, although returning to Mexico while children.

It was with Father Rahaim and Father Henrique Cardenas that we went about the seminary, they speaking good English and myself bad Spanish. It was a Thursday, the free day for the students, and those who were not out hiking or skating on the public pond a mile away were engaged in the various craft work which is such an important and perhaps significant part of the life of the place. They do wood-carving of a very high order, and work in concrete, leather and metals. They do their own plumbing, tailoring and carpentry. The cooking and laundering is done by Franciscan nuns, and the students wait table.

Most of this craft work is done under the supervision of six lay brothers, all Mexicans, unusually skillful and intelligent men, apparently hand-picked for the job. One of them is a medical doctor, borrowed from Isleta College, the Mexican Jesuit seminary at El Paso, Texas.

I wondered if this highly communal aspect of the seminary, more like that found in a monastery than a seminary, had special significance, but Father Cardenas said it had none, other than a desire to cut expenses. This they do very well, apparently, because the average cost per person runs about twenty dollars a month.

The students

The students themselves seem unusually alert and intelligent, but vary widely in physical type, since they come from every state in Mexico. They run from pure Spanish types to others of an equally pure Indian strain. They have a strange though quiet cheerfulness, and write letters home speaking of the peculiar quality of snow, which "looks like feathers" and, most amazing of all, "does not make any noise" when it falls.

They have contact once a week with the people of the nearby small city of Las Vegas, when townsfolk and seminarians meet at the ice-skating rink. On their hikes through the surrounding country where the east slope of the Sangre de Cristo mountains meets the Staked Plain, they meet and talk to people not unlike their own Mexican peasants and whose economic lot is not much better.

All of them, teachers and students alike, have a pervading quality of what might be called gratitude, except that it is something deeper and more complex. For they have been through various aspects of a systematic persecution. This was emphasized by an embarrassing incident in the leather-working room. The three of us entered the room where several youngsters around sixteen or seventeen were plying their craft. They turned for the introductions, in which my name was not mentioned. The second boy I shook hands with bent to kiss my hand. I have never been so embarrassed. Father Cardenas said: *"No es padre,"* quietly, and we left the room.

Outside, I asked him how the boy could possibly have mistaken me for a priest since I was wearing a grey tweed suit and a blue tie. "Oh," Father Rahaim said, almost indifferently, "that is the only way he has ever seen a priest in his part of Mexico, dressed in civilian clothes so that he would not be arrested. He thought you were a visiting priest from Mexico because of your dark coloring."

The seminary has now about 270 students, although it has had close to four hundred. In 1941, it ordained its biggest class, 71 priests. But it expects to settle down to a class of between forty and fifty ordinations a year. The reason for the decrease is that since the new administration in Mexico is not enforcing the anti-religious laws, more priests can be openly educated and ordained in the mother country. But the seminary will continue to function here indefinitely, Father Waldner tells me, since so long as the anti-religious laws remain in the Mexican constitution, another and succeeding administration might begin again to enforce them.

Whatever has given the men at the seminary their quality, whether persecution or something else, one comes away from the place with a sense of having taken part in some unusual religious

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experience, like First Communion. But perhaps it is just that they were all picked for a difficult job. There is Father Waldner, close to seventy, still speaking wistfully of wanting to do missionary work, and Father Rahaim, who left Belgium just ahead of the Germans in 1940, and now is impatient in his curious, worried way to get back to do something for that war-torn country. And there is the vague and disturbing resemblance of Father Cardenas to the painting of Ignatius of Loyola in one of the chapels. And the tall, scholarly librarian listening courteously to our bad Spanish. And there is the one Anglo-American Jesuit teaching and studying there, for his health. . . . These men are all internationalists in the best sense of the term, a sense that takes its meaning from the doctrine of the Mystical Body. New Mexico—and the United States—is a better place because they are in it, and like nothing before them, the students returning to Mexico priests, are building up among Mexicans a feeling of gratitude and deep friendship for the United States that will in time wipe out the memory of the shelling of Vera Cruz, the stupid exploitation of the oil companies, and the patronization of a million American tourists.

For what has happened here has the quality of one of those divine accidents, which no human being could have foreseen. Now, when the need for Pan American unity is almost desperate, there is in existence a full-fledged work that beautifully and accurately and completely points the way to those who care to see. This is not to say that we should build seminaries for the South American nations. It is not necessary to do so. It is merely to say that Christian peoples would like to be treated as Christians and not like characters in a bum Warner Brothers movie.

First Aid Class

By EDWARD SKILLIN, Jr.

IT WAS three o'clock. Doc Saunders sat impatiently eyeing the empty room and tapping the long director's table with a yellow pencil. His dark suit was neatly pressed, his iron-grey hair slicked back, his rimless spectacles in place. His ruddy countenance began to light up as the pupils slowly trickled in. Most of them—six girl office workers of varying ages and a like number of men of a fortyish cast—were carrying small American Red Cross first aid textbooks and envelopes containing large gauze bandages.

As is the wont of pupils young and old, they first filled the row back against the wall. From this vantage point they could note three formidable charts on the front wall hanging over their instructor's head: tuberculosis deaths in New York City year by year, a Christmas seal lighthouse poster and a graph of the leading causes of death in New York City in recent years. The windows on their left, flanked by cream-colored crash curtains, looked out on a monotonous many-windowed office building. A tiny corner table with glasses and water pitcher, a movable blackboard and a sizable coat-rack completed the appurtenances of the room.

The three rows of chairs had practically filled up. A pale girl with blood-red lips asked Doc if the window might be closed. "Have you a cold?" he inquired solicitously. "No? Well, we'd better keep it open then. When you get twenty-five people in a warm room there's too much carbon dioxide. You won't notice the draught when we've closed the door."

At roll call. Doc said he wanted to know each one by face and name. It reminded him of a specialist friend who couldn't recognize a patient until he'd looked up his or her nose. Only then would he address his patient by name. Doc smiled happily at this one. On his way down the list he came to the pale girl and asked if the room was warm enough now. He adjusted his glasses and rubbed his nose. First a review of last week's work. What is first aid?

The first girl in the back row stood up and answered rather nervously. She had it almost right. The official Red Cross statement is, "First aid is the immediate, temporary treatment given in case of accident or sudden illness before the services of a physician can be secured."

"Now we'll pick on one of the men," said Doc with his customary grin. "What are the main purposes of first aid training?" There were only a few fragmentary answers. "Hey," yelled Doc, looking around the room, "quit your cribbin'. The purposes are to prevent accidents to yourselves and others; to enable you to tell what's the matter; to learn what *not* to do, and to do the proper thing at the proper time; to find out how to transport an injured person.

"Well, let's go back to the women. You see, I play no favorites. Miss Sandrock, what do you do when there is an accident? Yes, that's right; keep the patient warm and yourself cool. Another one—keep the patient lying down. Yes, examine him for injuries not seen. Keep the crowd away. Say, 'give him air,' not that he needs the air but you've got to keep the people away. Tell them you've taken the Red Cross first aid course and you're taking charge. Get one or two to help you. Remember, you've got to give immediate treatment. Anything else? That's right; call a doctor; tell him just where you are, what you think's the matter, and what you've done for the patient. He might be out on the golf course and he wants to know what to bring along. It's always a good thing to notify the family yourself. Don't let the patient see the injury, allay his fears, tell him he's going to be all right. Cheer him up.

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"If you hadn't been late today I would have asked one of you to trace the course of blood through the body. Of course, if one of you want to volunteer? Fine. Now let's take the skeleton. How many bones in the skull? How many vertebrae in the neck? the chest? the backbone? The human body is the most wonderful organism going. Compared with it, the flowers and the other wonders of nature aren't in it. Everything vital is so well protected; everything is so well adapted to its function. Take the wrist, for instance."

He came down to earth and returned to the details of his subject. He called attention to the bones in the back. "You know, in the insurance business when a fellow has had several injuries and has a weak back, we attach a rider to his policy, so he can't collect if he hurts his back again. And we just paid a claim to a policy holder who had one of these riders because the adjuster didn't know what the sacral bones were."

The brief review concluded, the class went on to consider wounds, the need of stopping bleeding and preventing infection. Doc told how when he was a medical student they used to wash their hands with lye, carbolic acid, the hottest things they could stand. Then they would scrape their hands with a sterile knife, put the scrapings in a glass container in an oven and eight hours later find a terrific germ colony. Germs are so minute they can be seen only under a high-powered microscope. Germs are everywhere. "Just like the Japs at Luzon," he said, "too many of them."

The class then took up abrasions, clean cuts, jagged cuts and puncture wounds. Here again Doc reached into his vast store of personal experience. "The other night they got me to see a man who had gone to the drugstore to get something for his finger. He had hurt his finger a week ago and it was swollen and sore. I had it x-rayed right away and found that the pus had already eaten into the bone. I lanced the finger, scraped the bone, and four days later he was able to move his finger again. If he'd kept on with 'drugstore therapy,' as we call it, in a few days he probably would have lost his finger, maybe his hand or arm. If infection goes far enough it can even cause death."

Next the class turned to symptoms of infection, laudable and plain pus, kinds of antiseptics. He reminded the class that whiskey and gin are 50 percent alcohol and therefore better than many commercial antiseptics. "There's often plenty of that stuff handy, you know," he said. Rubbing alcohol wasn't nearly as good. For cleaning grease from a wound use benzine, naphtha, turpentine, kerosene—not ethyl gasoline, which contains lead.

"The book (American Red Cross first aid textbook) says to use 2 percent solution of iodine, but you've got to have the right kind of stopper or the alcohol evaporates. Iodine burns, you know. It's hard in certain cases to let the iodine dry, as the book says, before bandaging. Now what I like is compound tincture of benzoin. It contains that old-fashioned remedy, balsam of Peru, to make the wound heal—and cover it with a coating of shellac—and alcohol to kill the germs." Doc smiled broadly as he imparted this bit of wisdom. He went on to insist that after bleeding stops, the antiseptic should be daubed on or put on drop by drop—not poured on.

"When there's an accident, it would be nice if you had a complete first-aid kit right with you. But often you don't. You've got to use what there is. They say a true mechanic can do things without any tools. That's what I want to make out of you people."

The class sat up straighter when the subject of bandages was broached. Doc showed them how to hold a bandage by the corner farthest from the part to be placed over the wound. He did a number of tricks with a bandage roll, making a compress and skillfully managing it all with one hand. Then he said: "Remember, severe arterial bleeding must be stopped at once. You must uncover the wound. Use your eyes first and then your head."

He asked several members of the class to point out the six principal pressure points where main arteries lie close to a bone and, when necessary, pressure will stop severe bleeding. Finally he called one of the men to the front of the room. When he stood up himself, Doc barely reached the tip of his pupil's shoulders. He gaily inquired: "Is there a short fellow in the house?" After they had pointed to the spot just in front of the ear, the point an inch in front of the angle of the jaw, and the small area in the neck just to the side of the windpipe, they went on to the hollow behind the inner end of the collar bone and the halfway point between shoulder and elbow inside the upper arm. Finally for the artery to the legs they designated a spot a hand's breadth below the groin on the inside of the thigh.

Next came tourniquets and the importance of using a soft compress pad to spread the pressure and prevent bruising the artery in arm or leg. The old idea of using a stone for pressure would not do. But it is better not to wait for a pad sometimes, if much blood has already been lost. The loss of three pints of blood can be fatal. At this juncture one of the girls asked if a tourniquet on a right arm would stop bleeding from the right leg. Doc jumped to his feet, drew a simplified diagram of the main arteries on the blackboard, and set things straight. "Gosh, you got me scared," he said. He reminded the class that every 15 or 20 minutes the tourniquet should be released for 30 seconds.

The class kept plying him with questions about

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stopping bleeding from arteries and veins. Finally someone asked whether feet falling asleep had anything to do with the case.

"The cells get sort of tired, I guess. That reminds me. When I was a senior in college, I was sort of sweet on a girl who lived on the Jersey shore. I saw her most of that Christmas vacation. The night before I had to go back we came in about midnight—and I had to leave around six or seven the next day. We sat down for a minute before the open fire. I guess we must have fallen asleep at exactly the same moment. The next thing we knew someone was moving about getting things started next morning. And do you know, my foot was so fast asleep I couldn't walk for an hour and a half."

Doc tried several students before he found one that had practiced taking the pulse at home; finally one of the men came forward. Then he called on a tall, rather striking if not good-looking brunette. Her red and black plaid ensemble had the requisite short sleeves. "How can you get along without a watch," Doc felt called upon to ask the pulse taker. The black-eyed girl's pulse showed a beat of 86 and he explained, "the effect of a good-looking man."

Then the superintendent of the building, another of the regular pupils, came up to demonstrate his prowess with a tourniquet—which is used only in the most extreme cases. A coat hanger seemed to be most handy as the tightening lever.

"You must practice these things at home," Doc insisted. "What's the matter with you people? You've got to find out what's wrong, and you've got to know whether the pulse is fast or slow, weak or strong. Can't you get somebody to hold your hand?" At this point he waved away a rather detailed chart of a human heart which a helpful assistant hopefully brought forward. "It's too complicated; it would only confuse them.

"But before we leave bandages for today, there are a few things to remind you of. Always use a dry bandage. Don't make it too tight. The book says you should use a square knot, so use a square knot; but I always find a bow knot is handier, it's so much easier to untie when you need to in a hurry.

"And if there's venous bleeding from an arm or leg, not spurting from an artery, you can do a lot to stop it by raising the injured member as high as you can. Varicose veins are dangerous, for if the vein breaks, bleeding will be very severe. You'll have to apply pressure to stop it.

"What, is it after five already? You weren't here on time, so I've kept you a few minutes late. You be on time and I'll quit on time. You have your assignment; next week we'll go on with our bandaging." Doc delivered a parting shot: "Don't forget . . . if you can't take a pulse, you're in wrong with me."

Views & Reviews

BY MICHAEL WILLIAMS

GOOD NEWS is recorded by Bishop Gannon in his annual message, as Episcopal Chairman of the Press Department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, in connection with the press month campaign of our official Catholic newspapers and magazines. "A survey shows," he reports, "that many units of the American Catholic Press have soared to the highest circulation in their histories. Many evidences indicate that our press has otherwise attained to greater influence and prestige."

On the other hand, the situation faced by the Catholic Press—as by the Church itself, and, indeed, by all organized groups and individuals alike—is thus described by Bishop Gannon, in the opening sentence of his highly important message. "We are at an all-time low on earth in human relationship. Almost all nations have resorted to death and destruction of each other to settle their contentions. No doubt a new Magna Charta must be created to adjust and harmonize the relations between groups of men and nations.

The main directives laid down by Bishop Gannon for the editorial policy of the Church's press are mainly two chief tasks: first, the support of our own national government and its organs in its prosecution of the war, and, second, accomplishing its own high privilege of being a channel between the soul and the mind of the Church in aiding in the bringing about of peace with true justice. After referring to the pre-war period in America, when the Bishops, our leaders in the realm of ethics and morality, were "cautious and prudent in casting final decisions," because "until recently, all the elements of many problems facing the world were not clearly known," and when the "thought and sentiment of the people were in flux and much indecision temporarily prevailed," finally, "the thought and policy of this country crystallized into a hard and solid unity of plan and action."

"When war came," goes on the Bishop, "the Catholic Church, with traditional loyalty, pledged its resources, its institutions and its consecrated personnel to the President of the United States for the preservation of our nation and the destruction of the evil influences dominating our enemies. More, it pledged its powerful and constant prayers to God, Who orders all things. What was a jigsaw puzzle, baffling intelligence on account of parts that were wanting, was now a clear and definite problem, with no parts wanting, with minds cleared of doubt and definitely shaped, and objectives fixed. While a solution of the problem is now being worked out by our civil authorities, the millions of American Catholics are giving every ounce of support, spiritual and material, to the President and the nation that a victory of peace with justice may crown their efforts."

Success for the Axis, the spiritual leader of the Catholic Press points out, would menace the whole Church and bring, "undoubtedly, the darkest period of persecution and despoilment . . . that the Church has ever experienced."

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On the other hand, "with the success of the Allied powers, we may entertain hope, at least, for the emergence of a world in which peace, based on justice and charity, will prevail." Therefore, "it is obvious on which side in this horrible conflict Catholic ideals have the best chance for survival."

As the war goes on, particularly if, as seems most probable, the war is long and increasingly calls for the concentration of most industries for military purposes, it is most likely that a large, perhaps a great part, of the lay press will at least temporarily disappear, as advertising revenues are dried up, and paper shortage develops. While some of our Catholic papers may suffer, they are more likely to weather such storms than the purely commercial press. Bishop Gannon reports many signs of an increasing non-Catholic reading public for our press. In proportion as it maintains itself, and increases the knowledge of the Christian principles and traditions that are at stake in the world conflict, the place to be played by our Catholic press, both official and papers, like THE COMMONWEAL, which independently turn to the Church for guidance, will become more and more important.

Communications

OPINIONS OF OLIVER ALLSTON

Oakland, Cal.

TO the Editors: Will you allow two of your readers to congratulate you on your reviews? We were especially impressed with the keenness of that written by Father John Monaghan on Van Wyck Brooks's "Opinions of Oliver Allston." It leads us to get the book.

HARRY E. MAGEE.

San Francisco, Cal.

TO the Editors: In view of Mr. Van Wyck Brooks's recent hysterical attacks on the greater writers of our generation, it seems surprising that Father Monaghan's very favorable review of his new book has occasioned no unfavorable comment in THE COMMONWEAL. I am fairly sure that Mr. Brooks's latest critical aberrations are unimportant, but the curious smugness he personifies for the moment is too interesting to let pass. Father Monaghan has characterized the man himself very well, I think, in two or three sentences: "The author has an old-fashioned prejudice against the word religion, though he is worshipful, and he distrusts philosophy while he writes most philosophically about it. . . . Our national frustration to plan for democracy is due to a great extent to men as wise and warm hearted as Brooks, refusing to give answer to the question, 'What is man, what is he for?' Of course, these answers are ultimately personal, which is to say they are ultimately too religious to be faced complacently." One cannot imagine him as being very happy, where Father Monaghan puts him, in the company of Léon Bloy.

It appears to me that almost the whole group of modern writers Mr. Brooks doesn't like have been exposing the colossal folly of the attitude Mr. Brooks represents. They opened our own eyes inward upon the emptiness of our souls, they dared to look on our spiritual corruption, the sterility of our secular culture. Is it too much to say that, wittingly or no, "the dirty little gods who ruled in little magazines" have brought us once again to a realization of the workings of original sin? The rebirth for which all the world yearns is impossible without a clear-eyed appraisal of ourselves, without a sure knowledge of our life's meaning. Contemporary literature, "coterie literature which shames our common ways of life," has furnished us a more searching examination of conscience than Mr. Brooks is equipped to supply. Perhaps our common ways of life need to be ashamed a good deal more yet before we will cleanse the deep infection that can still destroy us. Already, what frightening prophecies "Gerontion" and "The Wasteland" and "The Hollow Men" have proved to have been!

Does Mr. Brooks really "give speech to the tap root feelings of America"? At the moment, I believe, he speaks only for the Philistines. "Because thou sayest, I am rich and have grown wealthy and have need of nothing, and dost not know that thou art the wretched and miserable and poor and blind and naked one."

An article in THE COMMONWEAL on Mr. Brooks's paper before the Conference on Science, Philosophy and Religion would be illuminating.

T. J. DONOVAN.

A WOMAN WRAPPED IN SILENCE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: My first letter to an editor was occasioned by the inability of Mr. W. J. Grace to understand the philosophical meaning of the word *form,* which I used without a footnote, to his annoyance and, in my opinion, to his subsequent polemical confusion. I tried to clear it up without success. This is my second letter to an editor, and I doubt that a tug of war on the meaning of *rhetorical,* with which pejorative epithet I (unwisely says Mr. Grace) characterized the style of "A Woman Wrapped in Silence," would edify or instruct COMMONWEAL readers.

But there is a story behind Mr. Grace's letter which readers may find divertingly comical.

In differing from Miss Brégy, Mr. Brunini and the undersigned on the merits of "A Woman Wrapped in Silence," Mr. Grace felt that all of us failed to see through a glass darkly what he immediately recognized as an authentic poetic masterpiece. One may see that clearly if one turns to his review of the book some weeks ago rather than to his somewhat frantic letter in the January 23 COMMONWEAL.

Under the headline, "Critics Declare Father Lynch's Poem Surpasses Anything Written for Over a Century," and preceded by a fulsome introductory paragraph, there appears in *The Catholic Sun* (Syracuse) for December 18, 1941, the following remarks by Mr. Grace and his collaborator, Mr. O'Connor:

> What if you were told that a poem has been written here and now that surpasses anything that has been written in Catholic literature for over a century? What if the work of a poet such as Francis Thompson seems to glare like Victorian plush next to the lucid beauty and naked climax written *here and now* by a young priest attached to the Diocese of Syracuse in the State of New York? What would you say if you had a poem that in penetration of reality both natural and supernatural, in ease of form and beauty of rhythm, compares with the "Paradise Lost" of Milton not merely favorably but with something to spare?
>
> We are not writing hysterically. We are ready to risk whatever reputation we have as critics on what we say.

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The review continues, describing the book as "a psychological masterpiece" whose "subtlety of thought" and "keener-than-Milton harmonies" it is impossible to demonstrate.

Having thus risked his self-respect if not his critical reputation, Mr. Grace apparently felt it necessary and desirable to disqualify those critics who, while admitting the obvious merit of the book as devotional literature, declined to promote it as poetry. I digress here to remark that there is an eternal temptation in the field of Catholic letters, where great poetry is so ardently desired, to inflate a good thing into a masterpiece and, by flattering your audience, to win applause for yourself. This temptation is especially keen in the case of editors and reviewers of poetry who are compelled to read amorphous and spiritless verses written in some sort of pseudo-scientific code. In our spiritual desert, almost any decent religious verse is likely to become a literary mirage.

What cannot be explained is Mr. Grace's inability to understand the issue brought out in the three reviews he attacks. His letter contains some hazy talk about "first-class criticism," "a priori conceptions" and his personal estimates of those who unwittingly detract from the critical reputation he announced as open to risk. The issue that Mr. Grace persistently fails to see is that poetry is poetry, an entirely separate art from the art of rhetoric, which sometimes employs poetic means to achieve its effects. And since critics are concerned in their discussion of a poem with the art of poetry, it is only natural that they be concerned with the "technical considerations" with which Mr. Grace will have no truck.

It is indeed odd that Mr. Grace fails to recognize the rhetoric of Father Lynch when his own letter evinces a rather neat mastery of its nastier subtleties. Space hardly permits the quotations of whole passages of dreary anaphora, extended transitions and repeated "We have seen this and we have seen that" summaries in "The Woman Wrapped in Silence" any more than it does the exposition of Mr. Grace's studied misstatements about and gratuitous evaluations of the opinions which oppose his own. To answer Mr. Grace's single reference to my review in *Spirit,* in which he submits "that the lines Dr. Connolly quotes do not meet any normal conception of rhetoric," requires more information than I possess about Mr. Grace's eccentric conception of such words as *poetry, technique* and *objectivity.*

FRANCIS X. CONNOLLY.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors: William J. Grace, in his letter advocating a thorough discussion and sifting of the criticism which has met Father Lynch's "A Woman Wrapped in Silence," presents some evidence to support a very untenable position. He makes a poor, indeed a pathetic, case. He declared in his syndicated column that the book "surpasses anything that has been written in Catholic literature for over a century." One might expect such a "rave" from a sophomore, not from one who simultaneously staked his reputation as a literary critic on this one opinion. Parenthetically, it is to be hoped that Mr. Grace did not stake his reputation for fairness on his letter in THE COMMONWEAL.

For he cites, to support his position, a quotation from Father Kennedy in the Hartford *Catholic Transcript.* Perhaps Father Kennedy has already advised you that he is the editor of the *Transcript* and that the quotation ascribed to him is from a book review initialed "A. I. Z." Is this carelessness with facts on Mr. Grace's part, or does he hope that the misrepresentation might go unnoticed by others who do not follow the diocesan papers as closely as he? Quite a list of "carelessnesses" could be cited in his past and present columns.

Again in commenting on my review, Mr. Grace—and this must have been deliberate—triumphantly points out my inconsistency in terming a quoted passage from Father Lynch at once "lofty" and "rhetorically bad" prose. To quote myself: "Too often his rhythms [Father Lynch's], for instance, fall into those of lofty prose; even more often he becomes intoxicated with words and piles up phrases with a sacrifice of clarity. These lines may be cited as typical . . . [Then, the quotation] Written in prose form, these lines could not be recognized as poetry; they would immediately be termed rhetorically bad prose." I cannot infer that Mr. Grace does not understand what is very plainly written—a grammar school student would know (what certainly an instructor at Fordham should) that "these lines" refers to the quotation and not to "rhythms" which "fall into those of lofty prose." Certainly he must realize that when phrases are taken out of their context and juxtaposed the original meaning is dishonestly distorted.

Another illumination on Mr. Grace's unfair tactics can be had in comparing the very scanty mention of what Miss Brégy, Dr. Connolly and I wrote with the quotations he uses from sources which coincide with his notions. It is unfair, for instance, to submit his comment on Dr. Connolly's review—"the lines that Dr. Connolly quotes do not meet any normal conception of rhetoric"—when THE COMMONWEAL readers have no basis for judging the review or "the lines" and are given only Mr. Grace's supreme court judgment.

It is also to be noted that Mr. Grace has modified his original columnar enthusiasm. Second thought doubtless prompted him to make an exception to the greatest piece of "Catholic literature for over a century." In his letter to you, he appends: "Omit Gerard Manley Hopkins, please." It should be pointed out that if Father Lynch's book is the masterpiece it is claimed to be, Mr. Grace's exception in favor of Hopkins is not justified. Father Hopkins's work is not, as anyone would quickly recognize, in the field of the epic; no one, in his right mind, would compare Hopkins with the Milton of "Paradise Lost," for instance. Yet according to Mr. Grace, Father Lynch's use of blank verse outdoes Milton. I doubt that the exception, justified or unjustified, can extricate Mr. Grace from the predicament into which his impetuosity has thrust him.

It is rather surprising to discover that Mr. Grace's terms have meanings different from those generally accepted. Certainly there can be little doubt as to what is meant by *rhetoric* nor even by *technical grounds.* Doesn't his Milton comparison rest on "technical grounds"? But, perhaps, he merely wished to becloud the issue. However, I have come across nothing more amusing than Mr. Grace, the author of a completely uncritical appraisal, protesting that others have "criticized on technical grounds rather than on the larger and more comprehensive grounds of first class criticism." It might be very instructive to have Mr. Grace give your readers his understanding of what he means by "first class criticism"—not in a letter but in an article which must meet your stricter editorial standards.

Again Mr. Grace submits that "these criticisms" (of

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course, from those who did not confuse Father Lynch's theme with his poetic achievement) "lack fullness and maturity of insight. . . . They are too personal, they lack objectivity." Well, I have read his dithyrambs on "A Woman Wrapped in Silence" and I failed to find anything mature or objective about it. Doubtless we should get together and determine precisely what we mean by these words.

My word *humanize* seems to have given Mr. Grace considerable concern. At least it provided him with a real peroration to his letter, oratorical in its construction but rather silly in its red-herring purpose. Perhaps, in taking a short cut, by my use of "humanize" I mistakenly relied on an intelligent audience which could make the proper interpretation. Any schoolboy knows that the Holy Family was human; no heresy has ever come forward on that point; nor is there need by your readers for Mr. Grace's didactics. If he requires enlightenment, let it be stated that Father Lynch's "humanization" lies in his descriptions of the Holy Family in the everyday minutiae of life. To cite a mild instance: Joachim and Anne protest Mary's plan to visit Elizabeth and the debate waxes, just as it might wax in the house next door where a daughter insists on having her way against her parents. There is always a question of taste, and a serious one, in such invention designed to demonstrate that Mary was "just like the neighbor next door." Theologically there is no ban on such meditation. Many prefer to think that Mary, human as she was, did humanly stand above her neighbors, although she necessarily made her home and performed the mundane tasks attached to it. Many find happier meditations on a higher plane than washing and cooking, and it can be advanced that the poet's work properly lies on that plane.

There is another small point. It comes strangely from Mr. Grace, who glibly talks about "the larger and more comprehensive grounds of first class criticism," to cite as a critical proof of his position statements made in "a leading letter in the *Tablet*." Oh come, surely, Mr. Grace must know his way around the communication columns!

JOHN GILLAND BRUNINI.

Westminster, Md.

TO the Editors: Though I have written no review of Father Lynch's book, and though I know that Miss Brégy and Dr. Frank Connolly and Mr. John Gilland Brunini can take care of themselves, the attitude of Mr. William J. Grace is a little too much for my patience. He is so sure of himself that, after asserting without any qualification that "A Woman Wrapped in Silence" actually "surpasses anything that has been written in Catholic literature for over a century (omit Gerard Manley Hopkins, please)", he challenges the naming of a superior work. Well, his terms are not clear; if we are to take "literature" in its widest sense, "Kristin Lavransdatter" and several dozen other prose books, including those by Newman and Chesterton, would come in. But he presumably means "poets" rather than prose or even specific poems. If so, I could name (omitting with pleasure Gerard Manley Hopkins, whom I consider a good poet, but one overpraised by fashion), at least a hundred better Catholic poets than Father Lynch among those who have written during the past hundred years. But if he is thinking of particular poems on a scale comparable to "A Woman Wrapped in Silence," I name offhand Thompson's "Mistress of Vision" and Patmore's "Unknown Eros" and Chesterton's "Ballad of the White Horse" and Claudel's "Satin Slipper." Even this, however, is apparently not just what he means, as he exempts Hopkins (a writer of short pieces, apart from "The Wreck of the Deutschland"); so it is left to other people to straighten out his meaning for him. Of course it is always an achievement to write any sort of long poem, just as it is an achievement to sit for a week on the top of a flagpole. In the end, however, long poems have to be judged as short poems are judged—by their quality and not their length. The first-rate long poem is to be rated higher than the first-rate short poem—"Paradise Lost" above any of Milton's sonnets; on the other hand, long poems that are not quite first rate (such as Cowley's "Davideis" or Southey's "Curse of Kehama") are less than the four lines of Landor's "Ianthe." The poem Mr. Grace considers so great is, from the quantitative point of view, impressive. But qualitatively it fails to equate ambition with performance.

Mr. Grace—like the fabled chorus-girl—has a book; and his book is Hopkins's poems; so much is this the case that he does not seem to have read Hopkins's letters. And clearly he has not read Edwin Arlington Robinson to any good purpose. Had he done so, he could not have failed to notice that nearly all of Father Lynch's best passages are imitative of this poet. The very passage he quote in his syndicated article, claiming that, as a close, it surpasses the last lines of "Paradise Lost," will serve. Here it is:

> She was alone. He would not come to her
> Again. She moved a little, and the sound
> Of movement lifted up against the day
> And fell, and did not rise. She was alone,
> And in her she could feel the flow of time
> That had begun and would go on, go on,
> To days, in silence, on and on. She was
> A woman who was now alone with time.
> And in her heart, the wait and ache of time.

That is Mr. Grace's show piece; and it is straight out of "Tristam," except that it does not have Robinson's skill. Does Mr. Grace wish a demonstration?

But Mr. Grace declares that the Catholic critics who have been a little luke-warm towards the best poem of a hundred years are not judging "objectively" but only by "technical standards." Again I ask, is he sure what he means? Obviously theological accuracy and piety do not constitute poetry. Does he imply that literary criticism should have other than literary standards? I had always supposed that the test of what purported to be a work of art was whether it was or was not beautiful. The substance of "A Woman Wrapped in Silence" may be fully admitted to be fine. What may be questioned is whether Father Lynch had the "technique" (which is a great deal more than metrical regularity) to effectuate beauty from his potentially beautiful theme. I do not find in his work either the depth of thought or the sweep of passion it demanded, as I do find them present, for example, in Lola Ridge's poem on the Passion, "Firehead." In short, Father Lynch attempted much more than he had the ability to pull off.

Yet I am far from asserting that "A Woman Wrapped in Silence" has no merit at all. We much applaud Father Lynch's courage and his persistence. As a pious meditation on the life of Our Lady his poem may be praised, with due reservations. Here and there good lines are to be found, but they are not present in sufficient

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abundance to lift the general flatness. And when they do occur, they almost invariably remind me of Edwin Arlington Robinson—as for that matter, do many of his worst passages. That he should have been so derivative rules him out as a poet; that Mr. Grace should have been so undiscerning rules him out as a critic.

Finally, I do not raise Mr. Brunini's objection to the taste of "humanizing" the life of the Holy Family. Father Lynch at least had the good sense to realize his limitations and to treat his theme idyllically instead of heroically. By that fact alone he prescinded from writing the greatest kind of poem, and I praise him for it. But truth must be served: it does definite harm to Catholic literary taste to have people like Mr. Grace making their absurd claims.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editors:

Some reviewers on critical bended knees
Have sought out the long-dead Eumenides
To assist in assessing the threnodies
Of "A Woman (that was) Wrapped in Silence."

Ensnared in dull blank-verse viscosity,
Her peace, cracked the nonce by verbosity,
Blown sky-high by critics' pomposity,
Will yet be revived from this violence.

LONECOAST, JR.

The Stage & Screen

Hedda Gabler

IBSEN'S "Hedda Gabler" is strictly a one-character play. From beginning to end it focuses upon the evil nature and behavior of its heroine. Its success depends upon the extent to which this evil is given coherence and relevance. Does Hedda act as she does simply from boredom? Or from pique, because a man who once loved her has found a more constructive inspiration elsewhere? Or from frustrated love for that man? Or from a pathological sadism? Or cowardice? Or thwarted creative excess?

The answer that emerges from a scrupulous study of the play is a fusion of all these, and a satisfactory performance of "Hedda Gabler" must weld the diverse motivations into a cohesive whole. Otherwise the action is melodrama.

Luther Greene's current production partly succeeds, partly fails. The celebrated Greek actress, Katina Paxinou, has authority, mobility and range. But she is handicapped by her unfamiliarity with the English language, which puts a severe strain upon the audience. And not only does her speech have a Grecian accent, but her interpretation as well. Ibsen's unique contribution to the theater was his evolution of the domestic drama as a more lively substitute for the then prevailing heroic drama. To play Hedda as an abstract figure of evil is to miss all

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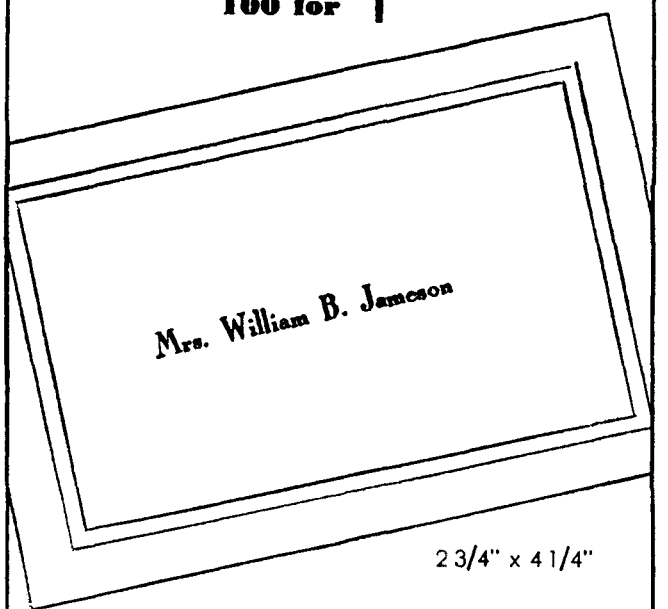

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the subtleties in the character. Lacking the psychological implications Ibsen intended, Hedda's behavior becomes mere caprice or pathology.

The production follows in general Miss Paxinou's reading. The prevailing tone is reverent and academic. Ralph Forbes is suitably fatuous as Hedda's professorial husband, and Henry Daniell is suitably intense as her target, but neither comes to life outside the frame of his characterization; perhaps here the fault is the author's, who throughout his career saw his minor characters chiefly as symbols. Paul Morrison's setting is unusually handsome, but its scale tends to inflate the tone and dwarf the actors.

The above paragraphs may sound more severe than I intended. "Hedda Gabler" dates itself least perhaps of all Ibsen's plays, and remains today exceptionally provocative theater. *(At the Longacre.)*

Solitaire

IT'S difficult to judge how much the charm of "Solitaire" depends upon the winning personality of its remarkable twelve-year-old star, Pat Hitchcock. The plot has to do with an imaginative, inward child of wealthy parents who are long on modern scientific theories of child-education but short on sympathetic understanding. The child makes friends with a tramp who respects and takes for granted her inner life. The parents and the tramp's cronies misinterpret the relationship and precipitate a melodramatic conclusion. In the end, it is the child rather than the parents who must arrive at understanding.

The theme, then, is no less than original sin: the necessary adjustment of the naïve innocent to the corruption in the nature of man.

But as a concession to current fashion, John Van Druten (following, I understand, the lead of Edwin Corle's novel from which he adapted his play) includes the half-hearted suggestion that economy rather than human nature is at fault; the rich parents are overdrawn to the point of caricature and the chief villain among the tramps is depicted as a parody proto-fascist. Rather than deepen the theme, these devices lend it a meretricious air; they appear to apologize for the play's real theme.

But as I have indicated, the irresistible charm of its chubby young heroine transcends the play's limitations of originality and depth. She avoids all the pitfalls: sugariness, cuteness, precociousness, self-consciousness, bathos; she makes it of importance to us that she come out of her experience whole. Victor Kilian is natural and sympathetic as the friendly tramp. For background, Jo Mielziner has designed amazingly solid, luminous sets of a modern-style California house with its flowering terrace, and the jungled arroyo where the tramps have built their itinerant colony. *(At the Plymouth.)*

Lily of the Valley

"LILY OF THE VALLEY" was also about tramps. However, its tramps were all dead. Ben Hecht's allegory of a country morgue has already followed its cast into the beyond, despite the eerie fascination it intermittently exerted, and the sincerity of its romantic sympathy for "little people." Its fault was the lack of any solid intellectual or conceptual core, without which allegory becomes untidy mysticism. By his own account, Mr. Hecht wrote his play "as a series of flashes rather than with any intent to shed a sustained dramatic glow." But isn't this incompatible with allegory? Or is it Mr. Hecht's theme that the after-life is as chaotic and meaningless as he finds life? Even this, however, he doesn't consistently affirm, closing with a pocket miracle to convince the remaining doubters of the existence and imminence of God. Mr. Hecht's head never quite keeps pace with his heart. And that's a pity, because it's a roomy and vigorous heart, lacking only discipline.

Myron McCormick, Siegfried Rumann and Clay Clement led the excellent cast; Harry Horner's set effectively combined realism with atmosphere.

DAVID BURNHAM.

Woe Is Me. Woe Is You. Woe Is.

READERS of *"Kings Row"* shook their heads when they heard that Henry Bellaman's sexy best-seller was being made into a film. These readers can now rest assured, for Warner Brothers have done one of their best production jobs, and under Sam Wood's direction the picture is expertly acted. While not always entirely convincing, "Kings Row" will be remembered for its interesting, moving story. Perhaps it depends too much on story. Casey Robinson's script has carefully toned down the sensational aspects of Bellaman's plot; but because so many incidents were crowded into one picture, the screenplay is episodic; and one objection might well be made: so much of tragedy, insanity, incest and variations from the norm could not be crowded into the lives of the people in one small town. Kings Row is "A good town to live in, and a good place to raise your children," the sign advertises in the '90's; and the film reveals just how good or bad a place Kings Row is "to raise your children." After an introduction in which we see the principal characters as youngsters indicating how the twigs are being bent, we see them some ten years later, not in their full maturity but old enough to be men and women of character. It is particularly in the sincerity of Mr. Wood's direction that "Kings Row" is fortunate; for even one bad portrayal of one of Bellaman's psychopathic characters would have made the whole film ludicrous. Robert Cummings does his best screen work as the sheltered Parris Mitchell who puts aside his fondness for the piano to study medicine. The vicissitudes of life upset his grandmother's plans to spare him unhappiness when she (Maria Ouspenskaya) suddenly dies of cancer, and later when his beloved Cassandra (Betty Field excels herself in this rôle of a neurotic) is killed by her own father (Claude Rains). Cummings's make-up is whiter and pastier than even such a pampered man's need be, but Cummings handles himself well in the difficult part. As his friend, the shocking "man-about-town," Ronald Reagan turns in a splendid performance, first as the rich young rake, then as the penniless hard-working man who is taught by financial adversity and a dreadfully cruel accident how to become a real person. Ann Sheridan will surprise many movie goers too with her portrayal of the girl on the wrong side of the tracks who

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shows people from the right side what true unselfishness and nobility are. Nancy Coleman also acquits herself well in her moving performance of a pathetic daughter who cracks under the domination of a fanatical mother (Judith Anderson) and a cruel father (Charles Coburn), who sadistically operates on his patients without anesthesia. Newcomer Kaaren Verne is lovely in her small rôle. Her calm manner and soft sweetness are particularly effective after the film has revealed so much sordidness and sorrow in this little town which turns out to be another Spoon River with all its unhealthy secrets. "Kings Row" will have a limited audience, but its fine photography, its serious treatment of strong subject matter, its fascinating, purely fictional story make it unusual adult fare.

"Sullivan's Travels" is another unusual item. Because Preston Sturges wrote and directed it, you can be sure it is worthy of attention. But perhaps Mr. Sturges bit off too big a piece this time; his picture doesn't click quite as satisfactorily as did those other three gems which he directed from his own scripts. Not that Sturges went high hat. His interest is still in the little guy even though this hero is a successful Hollywood director. Sullivan directs such fluffy comedies as "Ants in Your Plants of 1940." But he really wants to make serious social documents. So he sets out to learn about life. He meets up with a discouraged actress who guides and hinders him on his travels (because every picture must have a girl). "Sullivan's Travels" includes comedy, farce, tragedy, social comment, sex, satire, and it even walks into the valley of death. Each part is perfect in itself, but the whole has too much of contrast. Slapstick seems out of place next to the sourest sort of realism. And there is beauty too—long sections of silent camera that speak eloquently. Unfortunately the picture drags at times, especially while the truth-searchers sleep, eat and scratch with tramps to learn their ways. As he has done before Sturges directs his cast with force and honesty: Joel McCrea and Veronica Lake in the leads, and the large group of supporting players who are necessary in a story that moves from its hilarious ribbing of Hollywood, to drab Mean Streets in which our hero finally distributes five dollar bills, to the grim chain gang scenes where he learns from first hand experiences about brutality, kindness, cruelty and laughter. "How can you talk about musical comedies when the world is committing suicide?" Sullivan asks as he sets off in his educational travels. Then he discovers for himself that the poor already know all about poverty and what they want is laughter. And he gives them what he thinks they want—another "Hey Hey in the Hayloft."

A boy-meets-girl is a boy-meets-girl no matter what the locale. *"Joan of Paris"* is a boy-meets-girl with an Occupied France background. And while Robert Stevenson was successful in getting good performances from his cast and in sustaining a breathtaking suspense, the film never quite comes up to expectations. Michele Morgan gives a fine account of herself, in her first Hollywood film, as a Parisian barmaid who befriends a Free France flier and loses her own life in saving him and his English companions. Paul Henreid does the best he can with the rôle of the Frenchman who is tracked by the Gestapo. It is mainly in the script that the film falls down. Motivations are weak and the story too often just fiddles along when it should be strong. However, the players rise above the plot. Thomas Mitchell as the priest who aids the five hunted men, Alexander Granach as the Gestapo agent who speaks not a line in the film but succeeds in terrorizing his victim as well as the audience, John Abbott as an English spy in one brief scene, turn in effective performances. Although "Joan of Paris" wins no prizes as a serious visualization of France today, it is an exciting thriller that will give you more than a full share of uneasy moments.

PHILIP T. HARTUNG.

Books of the Week

Scottish Mary

The Gay Galliard. Margaret Irwin. Harcourt. $3.00.

MUCH of this book is written in the best "'Hell!' said the duchess" style, with an extraordinary mixture of old wives' tales and border ballads and Scots dialect and sinewy sixteenth-century phrases, along with touches of American slang and the anachronistic "narrowed vowels of cultured English voices." And the reader never finds out for certain whether it is a biography or a rip-roaring novel. Yet in spite of everything—in which the complete absence of documentation becomes merely a minor defect—"The Gay Galliard" is not so bad as it appears at first glance. Miss Irwin tells a good "yarn" and even her scenery is a vigorous actor, as this passage will show: "They rode over the open moor, the dawn breaking in streaks of pale light behind the hills that lay like sleeping giants all around them. The wind was from the west, driving and tossing the clouds before it in dark banners now flushed with red. The sun climbed over the edge of the still dark hills, and the foam of Winterhope Burn was turned to blood — then silver. Water ran everywhere, brawling in the burn, whispering hidden in the squelching bogs where the treacherous moss gleamed brilliant as emerald; the sun struck the autumn bracken and turned it to a flare of gold on the hillside, and the heather a fiery purple; the wind rippled and tore the bent like a running sea." That sort of thing one may enjoy, even if it is, like everything here, a bit overdone.

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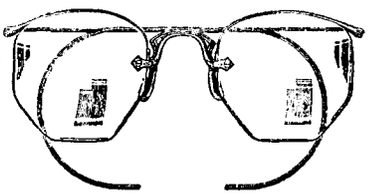

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The serious qualifications that have to be made are on the score of historical accuracy.

For her picture of Bothwell Miss Irwin has drawn, as she admits in the sole bibliographical acknowledgement she makes, upon Robert Gore-Browne. For her account of Darnley's murder she draws (though this she does not acknowledge) upon General R. H. Mahon's studies. His thesis, with some minor modifications, is hers: Darnley had himself laid in the stores of gunpowder at Kirk o' Field with the intention of blowing up Mary and seizing power in order to lead a Catholic reaction. This idea is of course preposterous and has as its only basis the fact that Darnley, using any weapon he had against his wife, had written to Catholic leaders abroad complaining that Mary was lukewarm in matters of religion. Coming as they did from him, those letters were treated with contempt. But as Miss Irwin puts it, "For evidence of the Gunpowder Plot one would need to question the Spanish Ambassador in Paris; Pope Pius V; King Philip II." Or again, "The Pope said plainly that he would have nothing to do with one who had worked for religious tolerance." What Pius did say, when he heard of Mary's marriage to Bothwell, was that he had washed his hands of her "unless, indeed, in times to come he shall see some better sign of her life and religion than he has witnessed in the past." Whether or not Mary was implicated in the strangling of Darnley—and I believe her innocent—she had married a man (with a wife living) who was universally believed, and is still believed, to have murdered her husband.

It is therefore impossible to make romance out of what is extremely sordid. Miss Irwin gives us the scene in which Bothwell rapes Mary (as he probably did), and follows it with another scene in which he binds her to himself by awakening her sensuality. The Bothwell affair is the one real blot on Mary's memory; nothing can make it romantic. We may pity her subsequent fate, as we should admire her courage and her constancy to her faith, but this love story stinks to high heaven.

As for the famous Casket Letters, Miss Irwin gives us a scene in which the Lord James and George Buchanan set out to forge them by weaving together some of Mary's genuine letters to Bothwell with the not very good French sonnets he had received from a former mistress. It is plausible enough, but is pure fiction. The sonnets, however, were rejected as Mary's by her tutor: the French was too faulty. And we can be reasonably certain that the Casket Letters were forged—at least to the extent of being tampered with—but we cannot be absolutely certain, as the "originals" mysteriously disappeared. All that we positively know is that Mary fell into the hands of as blackguardly a set of ruffians as history has ever known, and then fell into the hands of the Machiavellian Elizabeth of England. But that does not enter into this book, which closes with the parting on Carberry Hill. For Mary, life ended in honor on the scaffold at Fotheringay Castle; for Bothwell it ended in a Danish prison. His contemporaries thought him possessed of the devil; it is a matter of record that he died insane.

THEODORE MAYNARD.

BIOGRAPHY

All the Day Long. Daniel Sargent. Longmans. $2.50.

IT WAS a winter day some ten years ago that I first met Father James Anthony Walsh. After dinner in the faculty dining room at Maryknoll, he invited me and

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my associate to spend an hour or so with him in his room near the temporary chapel, where we could have a good talk without interruption. We were comfortably settled in easy chairs when suddenly he asked, "Wouldn't a little drink be to the point?" We both admitted that it would. From nowhere a bottle of excellent whiskey was produced, glasses, water. Then, diving into a deep recess of his cassock, he fished out (and *fish* is the right verb) a tube of anchovy paste, a box of saltines. "That might taste good with it . . . I just happened to have them. . . ."

At that time Father Walsh was not yet a bishop, but he was the hard-pressed Superior General of an order still scarcely twenty years old, requiring for its material needs alone some $1,000 every day in the year, an order with members scattered over America, the Far East, Europe. The press of his daily cares would have weighed down three ordinary men. And we were visiting him in an interest at first glance remote from the work to which he had dedicated his life, however closely the two may be related spiritually. Yet not only was his time most generously at our disposal, but he had thought of our physical comfort as well, of a drink and a little snack to go with it. And his delight in providing was reflected in his laughter, a physical expression of his character which was perhaps the most striking of all—a laughter of the whole man, very literally, for when he laughed, his entire body laughed, his shoulders doing a little jig as fit accompaniment to the twinkle in his eyes.

Not only was Father Walsh a holy man—and that no one who came into his presence ever could deny—he was amazingly able. He knew what he wanted to do, and he went ahead and did it, with a sublime self-confidence and faith that all would turn out well in the end. It always did. His achievement was apostolic in its magnitude, no plodding little thing, but on a major scale. Of course he always minimized his part in it, attributing much to his co-founder, Father Price, and to his co-workers. More he attributed to God. Mr. Sargent quotes what one of his associates once heard him say: "I have never worried. Even distressing times like these [the depression of 1929], I have not worried, because I have always thought that we were trying to do God's work, and that if we did our part, He would do the rest." But Mr. Sargent also rightly says: "Father Walsh, and he alone, was the animator of Maryknoll; he, and he alone, was the promoter of its growth. And he, and he alone, was the orderer of its growth so that its growth should be sane."

From all this the reader may gather that Bishop Walsh was, indeed, an extraordinary man; efficient, yet never hurried; business-like, yet never anything but affectionately interested in human beings; learned, yet wearing his learning as lightly as ever man did. To convey to a reader who never knew him the flavor of such a person is almost impossibly difficult; in in this I am afraid that Mr. Sargent has not succeeded. But to say that is not seriously to criticize his book, for to have expected success would been to have expected too much. At least—and that is a great deal—he recites the facts with charm and understanding; for that he deserves our gratitude. A great life of James Anthony Walsh—a life which went into a hundred matters Mr. Sargent does not discuss, matters which it would perhaps not be tactful to discuss, but which need discussion—would be something worth a man's effort and worth men's reading for many years to come.

HARRY LORIN BINSSE.

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The Inner Forum

From the Americas

MONSIGNOR FRANCISCO VIVES, Vice-Rector of the Catholic University of Chile, is spending several weeks in this country at the invitation of the State Department. He arrived in Washington the middle of last month. Monsignor Vives plans to visit Notre Dame and Harvard Universities as well as a number of colleges and universities in and around Washington and New York. Another instance of collaboration in university circles in the Americas is the scholarship program of the NCWC Bureau of Inter-American Collaboration, which is offering 20 scholarships in Chile, 10 in Peru and 10 in Bolivia. Applications should be addressed to the Bureau at 1312 Massachusetts Ave., Washington, D. C.

Catholic Action for January announces that Msgr. Michael J. Ready, general secretary of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and Rev. George Johnson, director of the NCWC Department of Education, and five other United States priests have been appointed by the State Department to committees in charge of preparations for the Eighth Pan-American Child Congress. This important meeting will be held in Washington this year, from May 2-9, the first time it has been held in the United States.

A good part of the current *News Letter* of the Catholic Association for International Peace is devoted to Pan-American items. From Costa Rica it is reported that the San Jose Archdiocesan Council of Ecclesiastical Advisers to Catholic Action is making a complete study of that nation's new social security law so that pastors may explain it to the people and assist government officials in carrying it out effectively. The Costa Rican Minister of Public Instruction in his annual report tells that during the past year the right of parents to require religious instruction in the official schools has been restored throughout the land. The Costa Rican Women's Branch of Catholic Action is taking an active part in circulating a new edition of the Social Encyclicals of Leo XIII and Pius XI among landowners and industrialists there. This edition, which is published by Costa Rican Catholic Action, is also being placed in a number of public and school libraries by the Ministry of Public Instruction.

It is reported from Argentina that Catholic employee groups there are manifesting a rapid growth. Its 25 affiliated groups now number 18,675 members as compared with 8,012 in 1936. This Catholic Employee Federation was founded by the Most Reverend Miguel de Andrea, who recently received from President Roosevelt a letter of congratulation for his address at the *Rerum Novarum* golden jubilee celebration held by the Faculty of Law and Social Sciences of the University of Buenos Aires.

The Federation of Catholic Workingmen of São Paulo, Brazil, reports a membership of 20,000 workers. This organization has eight other branches in the State of São Paulo. NCWC pamphlets on the family and on education are arousing great interest in Santiago, Chile, at an exhibit arranged by Señorita Lawrence of the *Noticias Catolicas* news service.

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Translated by Harry L. Binsse

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Walter LIPPMANN'S column "Today and Tomorrow" appears in the New York *Herald Tribune* and is widely syndicated throughout the country. He was one of the founders of the *New Republic* and was chief editorial writer on the New York *World* in the 1920's. Among his books are "A Preface to Morals," "The Good Society," and "Some Notes on War and Peace."

Harry SYLVESTER, a graduate of Notre Dame, was first a successful sports writer for New York papers. He now writes for *Colliers* and other popular magazines. Mr. Sylvester is one of the regular novel reviewers for THE COMMONWEAL. He is at present residing in New Mexico and his first novel, "Dearly Beloved," is to be published this month by Duell, Sloan and Pearce.

Theodore MAYNARD, noted critic, poet, biographer and historian, is the author of many books. His most recent ones include "Queen Elizabeth," "An Apostle of Charity: Saint Vincent de Paul," and "The Story of American Catholicism." He sends his review from Westminster, Maryland.

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